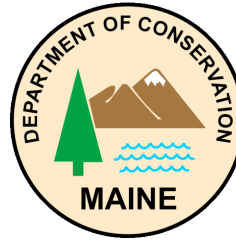


**The Maine Offshore Energy
Demonstration Area Siting Initiative**

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**State announces public information meetings
for ocean energy demonstration sites**

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(Augusta, Maine) The Maine Department of Conservation and the State Planning Office announced this morning that five public information meetings will take place in September to hear from key stakeholders about possible sites to demonstrate new technologies for deepwater, offshore wind energy. The meetings will be held in Ellsworth, Wiscasset, Machias, Wells and Rockport.

State legislation passed unanimously in June mandates that the Department of Conservation and the State Planning Office work together to identify between one and five demonstration sites in Maine's coastal waters. Demonstration sites are places where new technologies can be tested to see how they fare in offshore conditions.

State leaders are promoting the research and testing of new deep-water technology as a way to eventually reel in the installation and servicing of large projects farther offshore in the Gulf of Maine, which has enormous energy potential. The pursuit of the deep-water wind energy industry is driven by state and national energy policies. The Obama Administration has set a national goal of twenty percent wind energy by the year 2030, and Governor John E. Baldacci wants Maine to host 3,000 megawatts of wind energy by 2020, with at least 300 megawatts offshore.

"That's a huge opportunity. Compared to almost every other coastal state, Maine has very deep water, close to shore, and within state waters," said Dr. Robert Marvinney, state geologist in the Department of Conservation. "Plus we have three excellent, deep-water ports for shipping, making us the ideal testing ground for deep-water wind power. Maine has a unique and basic competitive advantage no other state can match."

Marvinney said that in particular, Gov. Baldacci's Ocean Energy Task Force, the University of Maine and the state's economic leaders are targeting the testing of floating platforms, anchoring systems, new lightweight blade composites, and the servicing and delivery of these systems into the Gulf of Maine as the deep-water wind industry matures.

"The University, which has been researching composites for two decades, is a strong partner that rounds out a comprehensive expertise package that only Maine can offer," Marvinney said.

The first step in finding appropriate locations for test sites is getting information from people who fish, navigate and recreate in coastal waters. Kathleen Leyden, director of the Maine Coastal Program at the State Planning Office, said good communication and collaboration will be

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Schedule for ocean energy public meetings announced, cont.

very important to the process.

“We need to identify these sites, but we also need to make sure that everyone’s interests align as much as possible,” Leyden said.

The schedule for the public information meetings is:

September	9	Ellsworth, Holiday Inn	6:30 – 9:00 p.m.
September	15	Wiscasset, Wiscasset Community Center	6:30 – 9:00 p.m.
September	16	Machias, UMaine Machias Performing Arts Center	6:30 – 9:00 p.m.
September	22	Wells, Wells High School Auditorium	6:30 – 9:00 p.m.
September	29	Rockport, Samoset Resort	6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Both Marvinney and Leyden said an important part of the public information meetings will be to explain the economic opportunity that Maine could take advantage of when the deep-water wind industry begins to seek out opportunities in the Gulf of Maine, the location of one of the best wind resources on earth.

“Somebody will grab the brass ring, and win the opportunity to research, test and service the new technologies that will be needed to achieve our nation’s alternative energy goals,” Marvinney said.

“Maine can and should be that place,” he said.

(Web site, Ocean Energy Task Force: <http://www.maine.gov/spo/specialprojects/OETF/>)

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